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ABSTRACT

The activities and accomplishments of the Success for All program are described. Success for All is a school-based achievement-oriented program for disadvantaged students in prekindergarten through grade 5. The program is designed to prevent or intervene in the development of learning problems in the child's early years by effectively organizing instructional and family support resources within the regular classroom. The goal is to ensure that virtually every student in a high-poverty school will finish third grade with grade-level reading skills. The program grew from a partnership between the Baltimore (Maryland) Public Schools and the Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools. To date, Success for All has been implemented in 50 schools in 15 states. It is based on the beliefs that every child can learn, that early success is critical for later success, that learning deficits can be prevented through intervention, and that effective school reforms are comprehensive and intensive. Activities and costs are described. A feature of Success for All is the family support team that works with parents to ensure children's success, providing community and mental health services if necessary. Ten successful program sites are described, and four resources for more information are listed. (Contains 3 references.) (SLD)

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Success for All

What is it? Success for All is a school-based achievement-oriented program for disadvantaged students in grades pre-K through five. This program is designed to prevent or intervene in the development of learning problems in the early years by effectively organizing instructional and family support resources within the regular classroom. In particular, the goal is to ensure that virtually every student in a high-poverty school will finish the third grade with grade-level reading skills. A corollary of "success for all" is that no student will be left to "fall between the cracks" on the path to acquiring good reading skills.

How did it get started? Success for All grew out of a partnership between the Baltimore City Public Schools and the Center for Research on Elementary and Middle Schools (CREMS), formerly at The Johns Hopkins University. Baltimore's school board president and superintendent challenged the research team at CREMS to develop a program that would enable every child in an inner-city Baltimore elementary school to perform at grade level by the end of grade three. The program was first implemented during the 1987–88 school year in Baltimore. To date, it has been fully implemented in 50 schools across 15 states.

What are its principles? Success for All is based on the beliefs that

- Every child can learn;
- Success in the early grades is critical for future success in school;
- Learning deficits can be prevented through intervention in preschool and the early grades, improved curriculum and instruction, individual attention, and support to families; and
- Effective school reform programs are both comprehensive and intensive.

What are its goals? The program is intended to

- Ensure that every student will perform at grade level in reading by the end of the third grade;
- Reduce the number of students referred to special education classes;
- Reduce the number of students who are held back to repeat a grade;
- Increase attendance;
- Address family needs for food, housing, and medical care to enable the family to support its children's education.

How does it work? *Preschool and kindergarten activities:* A half-day preschool program is provided for all children to enhance their development of language skills, school readiness, and a positive self-concept. A full-day kindergarten program continues the emphasis on language, using children's literature and thematically related activities. Early reading work, such as oral and written composition, conceptual development in print and mathematics, and alphabet games, is also

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included. Peabody Language Development Kits and the program Story Telling and Retelling (STaR), in which students retell stories read by teachers, are used to provide additional experience in language.

Reading program: During daily 90-minute reading periods, students are regrouped by reading level across age lines. Having a separate reading period eliminates the need for in-class reading groups and increases the amount of time for direct instruction. Also, using tutors as reading teachers during these periods reduces the size of most reading classes. In grades K through one, language skills development, auditory discrimination, and sound blending are emphasized, and phonetically regular minibooks are used for paired reading exercises.

From grades two through five, students use school- or district-selected reading materials, basals, and trade books. At this level, partner reading, exercises in identifying characters, settings, and problem solutions of narratives and in summarizing stories, writing, and direct instruction in reading comprehension skills, together with a form of cooperative learning, are all used to develop reading skills based on the Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (CIRC) program. The teachers and tutors complete briefing forms to communicate periodically about students' specific problems and needs.

Tutors: Based on evidence that one-to-one tutoring is the most effective form of instruction known, specially trained certified teachers work individually with all students in grades one through three who are not yet reading at grade level. Priority is given to first grade students as a means of preventing the need for remediation.

Special education: Every effort is made to address a student's learning problems within the regular classroom, supplemented with tutoring. Tutors evaluate the student's strengths and weaknesses and develop strategies to teach according to individual needs. In some schools, special education teachers work as tutors and reading teachers with students identified as learning disabled as well as with other students experiencing learning problems.

Eightweek reading assessments: Students are assessed every 8 weeks to determine the adequacy of their progress in reading. This information is used to assign students to tutoring, to suggest alternative teaching strategies in the regular classroom, and to make changes in reading group placement, family support interventions, or other means of meeting students' needs. The school facilitator coordinates this process, relying on teachers' active involvement in grade-level teams.

Family support team: This team is designed to work with parents to ensure their children's success. The team focuses on promoting parent involvement, developing plans to meet the needs of individual students who are having difficulty, implementing attendance plans, and integrating community and school resources. The team might include the principal or vice-principal, facilitator, social worker, and other personnel as needed. In addition, all teachers share the responsibility of interacting closely with the team.

Some family support teams provide community and mental health services at the schools. Public health nurses, part-time pediatricians, food pantries, family counseling, child care, and family literacy and job training programs are examples of services provided at some school sites. At others, the family support teams help put families in touch with the appropriate community agencies that can provide health and social services.

Facilitator: A full-time facilitator works with teachers in each Success for All school to help them implement the reading program. In addition, the facilitator coordinates the 8-week assessments, assists the family support team, facilitates staff support teams, plans and implements staff development, and helps all teachers and tutors ensure that every child is making adequate progress in reading.

Teachers and teacher training: Teachers and tutors receive 3 days of inservice training and detailed manuals at the beginning of each school year, and extensive classroom follow-up throughout the year. For grades one through three, the training is focused on implementation of the reading program. Preschool and kindergarten teachers

and aides are trained in the use of the STaR and Peabody programs and in other aspects of the preschool/kindergarten models.

Advisory committee: An advisory committee, composed of the school principal, the program facilitator, teacher representatives, a social worker, and Johns Hopkins research staff, meets weekly to review program progress.

How successful is it? Research scientists have conducted a series of assessments of Success for All participants which indicate significant improvement in test scores, especially for those students whose pretest scores placed them in the lowest quarter of their grade. In fact, only 3.9 percent of third-graders in the program since the first grade are currently performing 2 years below grade level, compared with 11.7 percent of the matched control group students. Retention and special education placements have also declined significantly since the program was implemented.

Some critics question whether the program can really afford success for all. Indeed, the most recent program data (1991) reveal that nearly 40 percent of the third grade students in the program do remain a month to a year below grade level. This criticism notwithstanding, the assessment results indicate that Success for All can have substantial, positive effects on student achievement.

How much does it cost? The annual per pupil cost of the program, in addition to the school district's per pupil allotment, is approximately $800. Although the fully funded schools have overall achievement effects only slightly better than those obtained in less well-funded schools, they had a much more positive effect on the performance of the most at-risk students (those in the lowest 25 percent at pretest). Thus, while less expensive forms of Success for All can significantly increase the achievement of students in general, guaranteeing the success of every student requires more funding. These costs could be offset considerably by the savings realized from reductions in retention and special education placements.

How does it compare to similar programs? Other approaches to early intervention have similar costs and objectives. The most successful of these all have elements in common with Success for All. For example, the one-to-one tutoring program, Reading Recovery, also has positive effects on low-achieving first-graders and, although the program does not continue past the first grade, recent studies reveal that its effects do. Several studies on programs featuring reduced class size do not reveal them to be as effective as Success for All. Other high-quality preschool programs have had substantial immediate effects on students' IQs and language skills, moderate effects on special education placements, and important long-term effects on dropping out and delinquency, but have had few effects on student achievement. In fact, none of these alternatives appears to be as effective in increasing reading performance.

What are examples of successful programs? Success for All has now been implemented in diverse parts of the country. The following are some of the most well-documented sites:

- Abbottston Elementary School in Baltimore, MD has the longest running Success For All program, implemented in the 1987–88 school year.
- Francis Scott Key School in Philadelphia, PA implemented the first Success for All program for children whose home language was not English.
- Fannin Elementary School in Wichita Falls, TX is in its second year in the program and, in conjunction with Midwestern State University, has evaluated it using statewide and ongoing program assessments.
- Merle J. Abbett Elementary School in Fort Wayne, IN is using court-ordered funds for desegregation to support its program, now in its second year. Evaluations have been done by Memphis State University.
- Chandler Elementary School in Charleston, WV has been operating its program for 3 years and has evaluated it using district-administered standardized tests.
- Orville Wright Elementary School in Modesto, CA and Fremont Elementary School in Riverside, CA participated in the development

of a bilingual Spanish version of the program which was first implemented in the 1992–93 school year. Implementation support for Fremont is provided by the Southwest Regional Laboratory of the U.S. Department of Education.

- Morton Elementary School in Morton, TX, perhaps the most rural school with this program, serves a very impoverished population of children of migrant workers. The program is in its first year of implementation.
- Kyrene del Norte Elementary School in Tempe, AZ has placed special emphasis in its program on the integration of special education students and teachers into the mainstream and on reducing referrals to special education.
- Harrison Elementary School in Montgomery, AL has developed an extensive services integration program involving community agencies and businesses.
- West Canyon Elementary School in Caldwell, ID has a broad-based cooperative learning component in its program that supports motivation and achievement.

Where can I get more information?

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1787 Agate Street
Eugene, OR 97403–5207
(503) 346–5043

ERIC Clearinghouse on Handicapped and Gifted Children
1920 Association Drive
Reston, VA 22091–1589
(703) 264–9474

ACCESS ERIC
1600 Research Boulevard
Rockville, MD 20850–3166
1–800–LET–ERIC

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